

13 Dec 1961

**MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Robert S. McNamara
The Secretary of Defense**

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Chromo*

1. At the close of the Executive Committee meeting on 4 December, I raised the question of courses of action we should follow if the Cuban SAM sites are made operational and a U-2 is shot down.

2. As we know from past experience, there is no guarantee that we will be able to positively state that the aircraft was shot down; we would have no firm evidence on which to base a retaliatory action. I am sure that in the circumstances described positive proof that the aircraft was lost as a result of hostile action will be required. Hence, we must take all reasonable measures to insure, to the best of our ability, indisputable and immediate proof that the plane was actually shot down.

3. In this regard, it is my understanding that there are several devices which might be brought to bear on this problem. Two of these which show considerable promise are:

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a. An RB-47 equipped with and motion picture camera. Such an aircraft could parallel the course of the U-2 and record its progress, particularly when passing within range of known SA-2 sites. The RB-47 would at all times be over international waters.

b. Another U-2 aircraft equipped with infrared sensors capable of tracking and recording on film the U-2 and SA-2 missiles if fired. This aircraft could also remain over international waters but fly a parallel course to the mission aircraft.

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4. There may be additional assets presently available to the Department of Defense which could be of use, and I defer to your judgment in this regard. I am, however, deeply concerned that a contingency as described above may arise. A decision at that time, at best, will be difficult even with all the facts in hand. In the absence of this most essential intelligence, it will certainly be even more difficult. I would appreciate your views.

(Signed) JOHN A. McCONE

JOHN A. McCONE
Director

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Signature Recommended:

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